

DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK

Capable Partners (CAP) Program for Capacity Strengthening of Local Partners

THIS IS NOT A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS. The USAID Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC), Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR) is preparing for issuance of a Request For Proposal (RFP) for its new initiative, “Capable Partners (CAP) Program for Capacity Strengthening of Local Partners”. We are soliciting comments from interested parties, in order to further refine this draft scope of work (SOW). Your comments will be appreciated and considered as we finalize the RFP for this Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC). The IQC will provide services worldwide to missions and USAID/W offices. No information on Pricing, Competition, Instructions to Offers or Evaluation Criteria is available at this time. Please refrain from submitting questions in regards to these items, as responses will not be provided. However, comments and supported suggestions will be considered and appreciated. The primary goal is to solicit comments/suggestions on content of the SOW.

All interested parties are urged to familiarize themselves with PVC, its Strategic Plan and the latest Results Review (R2). Information on PVC’s Strategic Plan and R2 can be found under the Overview section on PVC’s homepage at http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/pvc/pvcpubs.html

Comments will be accepted until November 15, 2001. All comments shall be address to Raymond Jennings, Contract Specialist, at (202)712-0626 or via email at rijennings@usaid.gov or Raquel Powell, Contracting Officer, at (202)712-0778 or via email at rpowell@usaid.gov . Thank you for your cooperation.

**PVC's CAPABLE PARTNERS (CAP) PROGRAM
FOR CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OF LOCAL PARTNERS**

SECTION C-DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS/WORK STATEMENT

C.1 BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVE AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTRACT

(a) BACKGROUND

The Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC)

The Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC), Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR), is the principal office within USAID for strengthening private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and cooperative development organizations (CDOs) and for promoting partnerships with their local counterparts.

PVC is a critical participant in the development of Agency policies that affect these non-governmental organizations (NGOs). PVC is responsible for registering U.S. PVOs for the Agency and is a central point of contact in USAID for information on PVO capabilities and programs. PVC administers and funds a number of competitive grants programs that support the organizational development of PVOs and their in-country partners as they seek to effectively address critical development needs. PVC's grants programs include Matching Grant, Child Survival, Cooperative Development, Victims of Torture, Farmer-to-Farmer, Development Education, and Ocean Freight Reimbursement. PVC's primary mandate is to strengthen the capacity of PVOs to design and implement innovative and effective development activities in priority sectors of mutual interest to USAID and the PVO community. PVC's Strategic Objective is "to increase the capability of PVC's PVO partners to achieve sustainable service delivery." At the same time, PVC seeks to ensure that increased capacity results in effective service delivery at the local level.

Capacity Building and the Capable Partners Program

A survey of Missions in 1999 found that many view the technical and organizational capacity of local partners to be weak, acting as a constraint on achievement of their development objectives. The survey also demonstrated that there is a need among field Missions for additional information and assistance in capacity building of local partners. Additionally, an Agency-wide Roundtable on Capacity Building conducted in April, 2000 showed that there is an abundant body of expertise in USAID on capacity building and many creative ideas on how to extend that knowledge to USAID Missions and PVOs that are offering capacity building assistance to their local partners.

Approaches to capacity building combine techniques for building the capacity of individual or multiple organizations. For example, capacity building approaches for individual organizations might include the appropriate use of capacity assessment tools; methods of improving strategic planning, financial sustainability and business planning skills; processes for building effective partnerships; and options for defining partnership relationships that include capacity building contracts, grants, endowments, etc. Capacity building approaches for multiple organizations or Local Non-Governmental Support Organizations (LSOs) can include techniques in establishing and promoting networks and coalitions among local partners; models for sector-specific capacity building; models of inter-sectoral partnerships; promotion of LSOs, including NGO Resource or Service Centers, at the national or regional level; and techniques for performance measurement of capacity building programs.

For the purposes of this contract, "capacity building" is defined as activities that develop, enhance or improve the organizational structures and processes necessary to achieve sustainable service delivery in a variety of sectors and contexts. In recent years, capacity building has come into its own as a development field. While models, approaches, methodologies and tools for capacity assessments and capacity building activities abound, distribution of this knowledge is uneven among USAID missions and non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and abroad. This program seeks to "spread the wealth" by improving the level of knowledge regarding capacity building methods and the ability of USAID missions and their partners to design and implement high-quality, effective capacity building programs as they work with their local partners.

"Local non-governmental support organizations (LSOs)" refers to indigenous support organizations that assist local NGOs and other community groups by either: a) providing grant funding, technical assistance or training in organizational or sectoral management, or b) serving as intermediaries between donors, host country governments, and local groups in a country or a region. These are sometimes referred to as "NGO Service Centers" or "Resource Centers."

"Local partners" include indigenous NGOs but also include community-based organizations (CBOs); cooperatives; federated groups; host country government units; local government; and small businesses (private, for-profit). The CAP Program comes at a time when local partners of donors and PVOs are taking on increasingly larger roles in implementation of development programs, as providers of services or humanitarian relief, as advocates for political change, or as links to communities and community organizations. Local partners, especially local NGOs, provide a necessary link for sustainable and effective development change as well as an attractive and less expensive mechanism for service delivery in a time of declining foreign aid budgets. At the same time, organizational and technical capacity weaknesses are often seen as constraints on the effectiveness of local partners to achieve development results. Assistance to these organizations can improve their ability to survive, then thrive, as effective development partners.

"Clients" of the CAP Program will be field Missions and USAID/Washington operating units. The Missions' local partners will be the ultimate beneficiaries of the CAP Program. The CAP Program seeks to support Missions in improving the abilities of their local partners.

(b) OBJECTIVE

Under its five-year strategy, PVC's Strategic Objective is the increased capability of PVO partners to achieve sustainable service delivery. The Sub-Goal is to strengthen NGOs and other local partners. The Capable Partners (CAP) Program will further PVC's goals and provide a bridge to PVC's new strategy which will continue to emphasize local NGO strengthening. The CAP's primary goal is "Clients and their local partners increase their knowledge and use of effective capacity building approaches." PVC has built expertise in organizational capacity building. With this Program, PVC is expanding its role from being a locus of support to U.S. PVOs to becoming a center for expertise in local partner capacity building for USAID field Missions and their local partners/recipients.

Through task orders issued under this contract, the contractor will work with clients and compile, synthesize and "package" existing tools, approaches, and techniques to address various levels of knowledge on the part of potential clients. The following are examples of priority technical areas that will be addressed in task orders:

- increasing familiarity with tools to assess the capacity needs of local partners to be more effective development partners of USAID (i.e. managing resources, projects and M&E systems, and increasing links to community constituencies);
- promoting financial sustainability of local partners by providing information and technical expertise on development of business plans, establishment of endowments, instituting fees for services and portfolio diversification;

- increasing knowledge of effective partnering skills that are necessary to ensure that local partners are able to develop and maintain effective, sustainable partnerships with Northern NGOs, other Southern NGOs, local governments, donors, etc.;
- providing services supporting development of capacity building strategies, program design, quality solicitation instruments, and effective monitoring and evaluation plans;
- assisting clients in selecting appropriate indicators to measure and reflect improvements in local partner capacity;
- informing clients of successful inter-sectoral partnering methods, and building coalitions and networks for achieving more effective results.

Information and best practices about these will be developed, maintained and disseminated by the contractor through tasks such as development of a website and regional workshops. USAID anticipates that these activities will familiarize participants with the fundamentals of organizational capacity building, and offer additional orientation and training in specific capacity building skills.

(c) CONTRACTOR'S ROLE WITHIN THE CAP PROGRAM

The contractor shall work closely with PVC staff and programs to ensure successful implementation of the program. The contractor shall remain abreast of PVC grant programs in order to capture information about capacity building experiences through participation in such activities as PVO network meetings that will be particularly useful for learning about capacity building experiences.

The CAP contractor staff is also required to consult with managers of capacity building programs in the Global Bureau and other USAID headquarters offices, to ensure that the experiences and lessons learned in those programs are incorporated into the information base of the CAP Program. Some other USAID/Washington-based programs that seek to improve the technical capacity of local partners include NGO Networks Program and International HIV/AIDS Alliance, Global Civil Society Strengthening, Latin America Health Reform Partnership Project, Africa Liaison Program Initiative, E&E Civil Society START Training.

C.2 SCOPE OF WORK

Implementation of the CAP Program shall occur through the issuance of task orders issued by USAID/Washington regional offices, field Missions and BHR/PVC.

The contractor shall provide the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC) such services as may be required under task orders to be issued hereunder. The Contractor shall also provide, as ordered by field Missions and regional bureaus through this contract, direct technical assistance services in capacity building to host country institutions to increase program effectiveness and the sustainability of service delivery. The services provided shall fall within two categories:

- ◆ Information Clearinghouse and Educational Services: ordered by BHR/PVC to support USAID and its partners' capacity building efforts, primarily through the use of information and communications technologies.
- ◆ Technical Assistance: ordered by Missions, USAID regional bureaus, and BHR/PVC to support broad-based and specific capacity building requirements. Several phases of services may be required, including regional workshops, assessment, design and implementation.

(a) INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The contractor will draw upon existing tools and follow-up mechanisms familiar to capacity building specialists to be a clearinghouse and provide informational services in capacity building. Experiences and lessons learned from prior and existing programs funded by USAID will be incorporated into requirements

under the contract. The contractor will provide technical and analytical services in selecting the best and most appropriate tools, techniques and approaches for various development contexts. As the state-of-the-art in capacity building moves forward, new tools, techniques and approaches will be assessed and tested by the contractor and clients. Through the CAP program, the contractor will continuously package new capacity building techniques into products that are useful and informative. The contractor will thereby broaden knowledge about and utilization of state-of-the art capacity building techniques, contributing to strengthening of local partners worldwide. The contractor will create a locus of information and expertise on the state-of the art in capacity building of USAID partners based upon lessons learned from past successes and failures and documented best practices. Illustrative tasks and competencies include:

1. Compilation, synthesis, packaging of lessons learned, existing tools, techniques and approaches in NGO capacity building into useful products disseminated through the CAP website, in hard copy publications or other media, and through training. This may include:
 - establishment of information database to include survey of all available USAID and PVO programs and services, other services and documents by other organizations, etc.
 - manuals, users' guides, papers describing the state of the art;
 - workshop documents and powerpoint presentations;
 - quarterly reports and other publications.
2. Development of an interactive web site, including such items as electronic bulletin board; list-serve links; links to best practices, studies and assessments; links to other capacity building sites, networks and related USAID programs; and intake interview to begin measurement of clients' baseline status vis-à-vis capacity building of local partners.
3. Sensitization and training through global and/or regional workshops in capacity building.

(b) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

The contractor shall provide customized direct technical services to BHR/PVC, USAID regional bureaus and missions on broad-based and specific capacity building requirements, possibly with PVOs and other USAID partners.

These services may comprise consultations in specific areas of interest to clients. Illustrative tasks and competencies include:

1. Institutional capacity measurement
2. Capacity building strategy design
3. Strategic planning
4. Business plan development to promote organizational sustainability
5. Human resource management
6. Management and information systems
7. Endowments, fees for service and portfolio diversification
8. Resource mobilization
9. Financial resource management and financial sustainability
10. Intersectoral partnering, networks, coalitions and alliances
11. Program design and management
12. Program monitoring and evaluation
13. Use of information and communications technology in capacity building
14. Promotion of women and disadvantaged groups in building technical and organizational capacity
15. Public relations and advocacy
16. Conflict mitigation and resolution
17. Leadership training

The CAP contractor will make available to clients appropriate products drawn from the abundance of existing tools, techniques and approaches in capacity building that are currently available, tailored to the client's context and priorities. The intent is to give clients access to the different options available to strengthen the capacity of their local partners.

C.3 REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

In order to perform the tasks required under this contract, the Contractor shall provide the appropriate specialist personnel. While the Contracting Officer will determine the appropriate level, illustrative qualification requirements for each level of the Functional Labor Categories are provided below. The qualifications in the categories below shall correspond to the applicable rates provided in Section B of the contract.

Level I: MBA, MA, MS or its equivalent, and ten years of relevant work experience, of which no less than five years was spent working in a developing country context.

Level II: an MBA, MA, MS or its equivalent, and five years of relevant work experience, of which no less than two years was spent working in a developing country context.

Level III: a BA, BS or three years prior work experience in a relevant area.

NOTE: In instances where either an MBA, MS or MA or its equivalent is required, the equivalent is defined as a bachelor's degree in the relevant technical discipline plus 5 additional years of relevant professional experience. In all cases where equivalent work experience is substituted for the education requirement, required years of work experience are in addition to the years of work experience listed for level/position for either the MBA, MS or MA.

Functional Labor Categories:

- ◆ Organizational Development Specialist
- ◆ Program Development and Implementation Specialist
- ◆ Strategic Planning Specialist
- ◆ Business Planning Specialist
- ◆ Electronic Information Management Specialist
- ◆ Training Specialist
- ◆ Administrative Support (Specialist)
- ◆ Communications and Media Specialist
- ◆ Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
- ◆ Conflict Mitigation and Resolution Specialist